

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-15, and 17-21 are pending. Claims 2 and 16 have been canceled. Claims 1, 3-15, and 17-20 have been amended. Claim 21 has been added. No new matter has been introduced. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

In the Office Action dated October 2, 2006, the Examiner rejected claims 8, 12, 19, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph as being indefinite. In doing so, the Examiner states “it is unclear as to how the *same* information can be used as the first management information and the second management information...” (*October 2 Office Action, emphasis in original*) Examiner also states “it appears that “regular use” indicates both an allowability and a non-allowability.” Applicants have amended claims 8, 12, 19, and 20 to clarify the meaning of these limitations. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections.

The Examiner rejected claim 13 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §101 as being directed to non-statutory subject matter. Applicants have amended claim 13 in view of the Examiner’s comments. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 1, 9, 13-15 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §102 (b) as being anticipated by Stefik et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,629,980 (hereinafter Stefik) Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections in view of the claims as amended.

Independent claim 1, as amended recites:

(Currently Amended) A method for execution by a client apparatus, connected to a communication network, to receive content data, said method comprising:
a step of receiving, from an external content supplier, content data and first management information that enables trial use of the content data and then storing the received content data and first management information in memory;

a step of, in response to operation of a user of said client apparatus desiring normal use of the content data stored in said memory, issuing a normal use request to a server apparatus connected to the communication network;

a step of receiving, via the communication network, second management information supplied by said server apparatus in response to the normal use request, said second management information authorizing the normal use of the content data;

a step of, in response to reception of said second management information from said server apparatus, replacing said first management information corresponding to the content data of which the normal use is requested, stored in said memory, with said second management information and

a reproduction control step of, when desired content data is to be reproduced by said client apparatus, reproducing the content data on a trial basis with a limited reproduction function if said first management information is attached to the content data to be reproduced, and reproducing the content data normally with no reproduction function limitation if said second management information is attached to the content data to be reproduced.

The Stefik reference does not disclose, teach, or suggest the method specified in independent claim 1, as amended. Unlike the method specified in claim 1, as amended, Stefik does not teach “***a reproduction control step of, when desired content data is to be reproduced by said client apparatus, reproducing the content data on a trial basis with a limited reproduction function if said first management information is attached to the content data to be reproduced, and reproducing the content data normally with no reproduction function limitation if said second management information is attached to the content data to be reproduced.***” (hereinafter “reproduction control step limitation”)

Stefik is directed to distribution and usage rights enforcement for digitally encoded works. Stefik discloses that digital-work-related management information is set or rewritten in a server. Further, Stefik discloses that the server checks validity of a player ID and compatibility of the player ID with the player specification. (*Stefik*, Col. 36, lines 51 – 53) These checks must be made by the server every time content is requested, which tends to be very cumbersome.

The method specified in independent claim 1, as amended, is distinct from Stefik because when content is to be reproduced by the client apparatus, a determination is made promptly as to

whether the content is to be reproduced on a trial basis or on a normal basis. Thus, Stefik fails to disclose, teach, or suggest the reproduction control step limitation.

In addition, Stefik does not disclose, teach, or suggest *“a step of receiving, from an external content supplier, content data and first management information that enables trial use of the content data and then storing the received content data and first management information in memory”* or *“a step of receiving, via the communication network, second management information supplied by said server apparatus in response to the normal use request, said second management information authorizing the normal use of the content data”*. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 1, as amended distinguishes over Stefik.

Independent claims 9, 13, 14, 15, and 17 recite limitations similar to those in independent claim 1, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 9, 13, 14, 15, and 17 distinguish over Stefik for reasons similar to those set forth above with respect to independent claim 1, as amended.

Claims 3-8 and 21 depend from independent claim 1, as amended. Claims 10-12 depend from independent claim 9, as amended. Claim 19 depends from independent claim 15, as amended. Claims 18 and 20 depend from independent claim 17, as amended. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 3-8, 10-12, and 18-21 distinguish over Stefik for the same reasons set forth above with respect to independent claims 1, 9, 13, 14, 15, and 17, respectively.

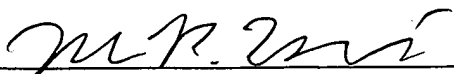
Applicants believe that the claims are in condition for allowance. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application other than in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the Los Angeles, California telephone number (213) 488-7100

to discuss the steps necessary for placing the application in condition for allowance should the Examiner believe that such a telephone conference call would advance prosecution of the application.

Respectfully submitted,

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